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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Bravo Battery is back in U.S.A

GULFPORT, Miss. – Back in the U.S.A! The Soldiers of Bravo Battery returned safely to the United States on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 19, at the Mississippi Air National Guard Combat Readiness Training Center after spending 10 months overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“It’s great to be back in the U.S.,” said Maj. Kory Knight, commander of Battery B. “But we’re not home yet.”

Battery B, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery is a South Dakota Army National Guard unit headquartered in Salem and Sioux Falls. The unit was stationed at Contingency Operating Base Adder located on Tallil Air Base near An Nasiriyah, Iraq, approximately 193 miles southeast of Baghdad. The 180 Soldiers of Battery B arrived in Iraq in early January and conducted various security missions for the past 10 months in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Unit members were welcomed by a South Dakota National Guard reception team that has been preparing for the Soldiers’ arrival for the past week in Mississippi. Later today, the returning veterans will be transported 60 miles north to Camp Shelby where they will begin the demobilization process required prior to returning to South Dakota.

Once at Camp Shelby, Battery B will be back where it started one year ago when it mobilized and began its pre-deployment training in preparation for deployment to Iraq.

While going through the demobilization process, Soldiers will finalize deployment issues related to their personnel records, finance, medical, healthcare coverage, equipment, and the benefits and services entitled to them as the nation’s newest veterans.

SOUTH DAKOTA ARRIVAL and CEREMONIAL TIME LINE: This information will be finalized over the next couple of days and will be officially released as soon as possible.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact Maj. Orson Ward at (605) 737-6721, (605) 431-8753, or e-mail orson.ward@us.army.mil.

NOTE 1: Since the terrorist attacks on America, the South Dakota National Guard has mobilized more than 3,100 Soldiers and 1,000 Airmen in support of the Global War on Terror.

Currently, more than 30 Soldiers and Airmen from the South Dakota National Guard remain on duty in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other locations throughout Southwest Asia and Europe. More than 3,600 National Guardsmen are available in South Dakota to provide support for state and national emergencies and homeland defense.